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MAD CAVE 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

DICK TRACY®

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MAD CAVE®

"...IT'S AN INSULT, AN OFFENSE TO THE ENTIRE CITY."

ALL THAT LAND--IT'S BEEN OFF-LIMITS FOR ***YEARS.*** IT'S A PUBLIC SPACE FOR FAMILIES AND KIDS AND EVERYONE ELSE TO USE. THAT'S WHAT THE CITY FOUNDERS RESERVED IT FOR. BUT MONEY TALKS, RIGHT? AND DEAD FOUNDERS DON'T.

THE QUESTION IS, WHERE'S THAT MONEY ***COMING*** FROM?

THAT'S THE QUESTION INDEED, MISS TRUEHEART. THE ***BIG*** QUESTION. AND THERE'S ***MORE...***

...WHOEVER'S RUNNING THIS SHOW'S BEEN BRINGING IN VETS TO DO THE GRUNT WORK. THESE BOYS COMING HOME FROM THE WAR--IT HASN'T BEEN A BOOM TIME FOR ALL OF 'EM. A LOT ARE DESPERATE FOR WORK.

SOME END UP HERE, BUILDING HOUSES FOR THE RICH AND GETTING PAID PEANUTS.

PEOPLE LIKE YOUR BROTHER?

YEAH...

"...PEOPLE LIKE MY BROTHER."

THIS WAS THE LAST PLACE HE WAS SEEN ALIVE, AND THEY'RE GOING TO TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM.

WHETHER THEY WANT TO OR *NOT.*

WELL, HERE'S AN INTERESTING CHARACTER. YOU KNOW THIS GUY?

THE ONE COMING AROUND HIS CAR. THE BIG ONE...

"...*SCARS* ALL OVER HIS FACE."

OH, I KNOW HIM, ALL RIGHT. I KNOW HIM *WELL.*

THEY CALL HIM ***PRUNEFACE.*** GOT THOSE SCARS DURING THE WAR. A SHAME THAT'S ALL HE GOT.

WORD WAS HE WAS A ***TRAITOR.*** SOLD OUT HIS SQUAD TO SAVE HIS OWN NECK. GAVE THE ENEMY THEIR LOCATION, BUT THINGS DIDN'T GO AS PLANNED.

PRUNEFACE MANAGED TO DISTANCE HIMSELF FROM HIS SQUAD WHEN THE ATTACK HAPPENED, BUT LUCKILY, HE LEARNED A SIMPLE LESSON...

"...FIREBOMBING IS RARELY ACCURATE."

AAAAHHHHHH!

EVERY MAN IN PRUNEFACE'S SQUAD DIED THAT DAY.

EVERY MAN EXCEPT *HIM.*

AAAAAHHH--

"SOME MEN ARE LUCKY--YOU DON'T SURVIVE WAR WITHOUT AT LEAST A LITTLE BIT OF IT ON YOUR SIDE. BUT SOME MEN...

"...SOME ARE SIMPLY *EVIL.*"

HA HA HA HA HA!

"TRACY. HEY, *TRACY?*"

YOU WITH US?

YES...YES. I'M JUST... THINKING.

PAT, IF YOU'RE GONNA BE IN ON THIS, I NEED TO DEPUTIZE YOU. ARE YOU WILLING TO COOL THAT TEMPER OF YOURS AND SWEAR THE OATH?

IF IT MEANS BRINGING THESE BASTARDS TO JUSTICE, CONSIDER ME SWORN. BUT TRACY, WE DON'T NEED OATHS FOR WHAT I'VE GOT IN MIND--WE NEED *MANPOWER.*

AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO GET. *TONIGHT.*

OH, GREAT. YOU BOYS GET YOUR *MAN*POWER. I GUESS I'LL GO BAKE A CAKE AND PREPARE FOR YOUR RETURN.

NO, TESS, YOU'VE GOT A DIFFERENT JOB TONIGHT.

SINCE YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS WHAT HE'S SAYING, YOU'RE GOING TO GO HAVE A CHAT WITH OUR FRIEND *MUMBLES.*

MOVE IT, YOU--*MOVE* IT! WE GOTTA GET THESE CRATES OUTTA HERE, AND NONE OF YOU MOOKS ARE BEING PAID TO BE *SLOW!*

AND WHAT DO YOU THINK *YOU'RE* DOING?

SORRY, SORRY, BUT I NEED A BREAK, MR. ITCHY. YOU BEEN WORKING US TO THE BONE, AND--

AND *NOTHING.* YOU GET MOVING THESE CRATES, OR YOUR BONES WON'T BE OVERWORKED-- THEY'LL BE *BUSTED.* NOW PICK UP THAT--

WAIT.

VVVRRRRMMMMMM

YOU HEAR THAT?

KKKRRRRRSSSLLSH

NOBODY MOVE!

WHOA, WHOA, WHOA! OFFICER!

WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION?

NO COMMOTION-- JUST A ROUTINE ***RAID.***

A RAID? WH--WHY? I'M RUNNING A BUSINESS HERE. A LEGITIMATE ***BUSINESS.***

THEN I GUESS YOU WON'T MIND ME CHECKING WHAT'S IN THESE CRATES, WILL YOU?

ACTUALLY, I WOULD MIND. WE'RE ON A TIGHT SCHEDULE AND NEED TO GET THESE MATERIALS MOVED OUT OF HERE ***YESTERDAY.***

AND WHAT MATERIALS WOULD THOSE BE? BECAUSE MY FRIEND OVER HERE TELLS ME YOU'RE MOVING ***DRUGS.***

THAT'S HOW YOU'RE FUNDING THIS LAKESIDE DEVELOPMENT OF YOURS.

YES, WELL, YOUR ***FRIEND...***

...IS A ***NUISANCE.*** HE'S DETERMINED TO BLAME MY ***EMPLOYER*** FOR HIS SUFFERING RATHER THAN ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY OF HIS OWN.

I'D WATCH YOUR TWITCHY MOUTH IF I WERE YOU.

AND WHO ***IS*** THIS MYSTERIOUS ***EMPLOYER*** OF YOURS? TELL ME THAT, AND YOU JUST MIGHT GET YOURSELF OUT OF THIS JAM.

I'M AFRAID I'M NOT AT LIBERTY TO DIVULGE THAT INFORMATION AT THIS TIME.

I FIGURED YOU'D SAY THAT.

BOYS!

LET'S *TEAR* THIS PLACE APART!

WE'RE GOING TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF ALL OF THIS.

AND WHEN WE DO, YOU'RE GOING TO LOOK BACK AND WISH YOU'D TAKEN MY DEAL WHEN YOU HAD THE--

--CHANCE?

BUILDING MATERIALS. THAT'S ALL YOU'RE GONNA FIND HERE, *DICK.*

BUILDING MATERIALS.

TRACY!

WE'RE SEEING NOTHING BUT PIPES AND STUFF HERE, TOO, TRACY.

I'VE GOT A TOILET...

THIS ISN'T RIGHT--THIS *CAN'T* BE RIGHT! I'VE STAKED THIS PLACE OUT A DOZEN TIMES. I'VE *SEEN* THE DRUGS COMING IN AND OUT. THEY'VE GOTTA BE HERE *SOMEWHERE.* WE JUST GOTTA KEEP--

IT'S OVER. WE'RE LEAVING.

NO, DAMN IT! WE NEED TO FIND--

PAT, *WE'RE LEAVING.*

YOU BOYS HAVE YOURSELF A NICE NIGHT.

HE WAS TIPPED OFF. THAT ITCHY BASTARD-- SOMEONE ***HAD*** TO TIP HIM OFF.

THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE. THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO KNEW ABOUT THE RAID ARE ON THE ***FORCE.***

THEN MAYBE IT WAS SOMEONE ON THE INSIDE WHO--

VVVVRRRRMMMMMM

PAT--

SSSCRREEECCH

NO.

WELL, WELL, WELL. HOW ***CONVENIENT.*** ALL OUR ENEMIES TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE.

IT'S A LUCKY NIGHT.

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
BUDDA BUDDA
BUDDA

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

DOWN! GET DOWN!

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

AAAHHH!

WHEN I GIVE THE WORD, COVER ME!

COVER YOU?! TRACY, THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE BUT BULLETS!

MY MEN ARE GETTING MOWED DOWN OUT THERE! NOW GET READY--

BLAM BLAM

NOW!

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

ALL RIGHT, BOYS, ENOUGH! ENOUGH!

BLAM BLAM

ITCHY! TELL YOUR BOSS THAT LIPS HEARD HIM LOUD AND CLEAR.

IF IT'S WAR HE WANTS...

"...THEN WAR IS WHAT HE'LL GET!"

"HELLO? ANYBODY HERE?"

UH, LOOK, DICK TRACY SENT ME. I NEED TO SPEAK WITH ***MUMBLES.*** I KNOW THAT SOUNDS CRAZY BECAUSE... WELL, BECAUSE HE'S MUMBLES, BUT IF I CAN JUST HAVE A FEW MINUTES--

I CAN STAND HERE LIKE A FOOL AND TALK TO MYSELF, APPARENTLY.

JEEZ, TRACY. WHAT KIND OF WILD GOOSE CHA--

:GASP:

OH MY GOD.

HOW...I THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE UNDER POLICE PROTECTION? WHERE... WHERE ARE THE--

WHAT ARE WE GONNA TELL TRACY?

WHAT ARE WE GONNA TELL THE *CHIEF?*

THERE'S GOTTA BE A WAY FOR US TO EXPLAIN THIS. MAYBE... MAYBE WE SAY WE GOT KNOCKED OUT. SOMEONE RUSHED IN, AND THEY--

SLAM

WHAT WAS THAT?!

MAYBE IT WAS JUST THE WIND?

OR MAYBE IT WAS THAT FLATTOP FREAK COMING BACK? CARE TO FIND OUT?

PARTNER...

...I'VE HAD *ENOUGH* EXCITEMENT FOR ONE DAMN NIGHT.

...DEAD! HE'S DEAD!

WHAT? TESS? TESS, CALM DOWN.

NOW, TAKE A BREATH, TESS. SLOW DOWN. WHAT HAPPENED? WHO'S DEAD?

I JUST...I SAW... MUMBLES...

SHE'S SHAKEN UP BAD, TRACY. LADY NEEDS--

WHAT I NEED IS TO BE LISTENED TO.

IT'S MUMBLES. HE'S DEAD. SHOT UP LIKE SWISS CHEESE-- SOMEONE TOOK A TOMMY GUN TO HIM LIKE NOBODY'S BUSINESS.

...A TOMMY GUN?

I'M FINE, ALL RIGHT? I CAN HANDLE THIS. I JUST--

TRACY? WHAT'S GOING ON IN THAT HEAD OF YOURS? YOU THERE?

YES, PAT, YES--SORRY. I...I DRIFTED AWAY FOR A SECOND.

I DON'T LIKE ANY OF THIS. FIRST MUMBLES GETS IT, THEN ITCHY GETS TIPPED OFF TO OUR RAID. SOMETHING FEELS WRONG.

THAT'S BECAUSE IT *IS* WRONG.

YOU GOT A SPY ON YOUR HANDS, DETECTIVE.

IF YOU'RE RIGHT, EVERYTHING WE KNOW--EVERYTHING WE THINK IS A SECRET IS...

TRACY? *TRACY!*

LET'S KEEP OUR HEADS TOGETHER. WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHO MIGHT BENEFIT FROM--

AH, THERE YOU ARE.

WHAT'S THE EMERGENCY, CHIEF?

I KNOW YOU'RE OVERWHELMED, TRACY. I HEARD ABOUT THE WAREHOUSE AND--

IT'LL GET SORTED. RIGHT NOW, I'M JUST TRYING TO GET MY MEN SITUATED AFTER THE SHOOT OUT, AND--

LISTEN. IT'S IMPORTANT.

IT'S ABOUT THE GREEN EYE KILLERS.

WE GOT 'EM.

IPPOLITO AND HART PICKED UP THE ARSON SIBLINGS--BORIS AND ZORA--TRYING TO ROB THE FIRST NATIONAL ON THE EDGE OF TOWN.

THAT'S GREAT, CHIEF, BUT--

THE GUNS THEY HAD? THEY'RE A ***MATCH*** FOR THE ONES USED IN THE KILLINGS.

BUT--THE ARSONS? I KNOW THOSE TWO. PICKED THEM UP MYSELF. THEY'RE NOT KILLERS. THEY PULL HALF-BAKED HEISTS, NOT COLD-BLOODED MASS MURDER.

BUT YOU KNOW THAT.

WHAT ARE YOU DRIVING AT, TRACY? PEOPLE GO BAD ALL THE TIME.

IT JUST DOESN'T TRACK. IT'S TOO BIG A LEAP FOR SMALL-TIMERS LIKE THE ARSONS.

SURELY YOU SEE THAT, CHIEF.

TRACY, I HEAR YOU, BUT YOU'RE WORKING YOURSELF TO THE BONE, SON. TAKE THE WIN AND FOCUS ON EVERYTHING ELSE.

IT'S ***NOT*** EXHAUSTION TALKING. THE ARSONS ARE ***PATSIES.***

THIS CASE IS CLOSED, SON. THINK ON IT A BIT, AND YOU'LL SEE WHERE I'M COMING FROM.

BUT--

YOU GOTTA SHAKE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN HEARING, TRACY. THAT PATTON KID'S GOT AN AXE TO GRIND THE SIZE OF THE MOON, AND YOUR REPORTER FRIEND ISN'T ANY BETTER.

THIS IS THE JOB. WE TAKE THE VICTORY, AND WE MOVE ON. THE CITY'S STREETS ARE SOAKED IN BLOOD.

FOCUS ON THAT, CAN YA?

NOW GET YOURSELF SOME REST AND--

WHO DOES FLATTOP WORK FOR?

HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?

HE'S NOT PART OF LIP'S GANG--THAT'S THE ONE THING I KNOW ABOUT HIM.

AND SHOULDERS IS LIPS'S BOY. HE'S THE ONE WHO SHOT UP OUR RAID.

IT DOESN'T ADD UP.

YOU THINK TOO MUCH, TRACY-- Y'KNOW THAT?

IF I WERE YOU, I'D BE CELEBRATING--

NOT NOW. NOT WHEN THERE'S A NEW PLAYER ON THE BOARD, AND THIS GUY--THIS FLATTOP--HE'S THEIR ATTACK DOG. THAT'S WHERE THE BLOOD'S COMING FROM.

THAT'S MY MAIN CONCERN, CHIEF.

I WANT TO KNOW WHO IT IS.

I *HAVE* TO KNOW WHO IT IS.

I DON'T LIKE HOW YOU'RE TALKING TO ME, TRACY. BUT I'LL TAKE IT. BECAUSE I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH HELL, AND WE'RE JUST TAKING OUR FIRST STEPS INTO ONE FINE MESS.

BUT I HAVE NOTHING FOR YOU, SON, NOTHING BUT A WARNING.

BE CAREFUL WHO YOU TRUST.

NOW GET SOME REST, Y'HEAR? THAT'S AN ORDER.

WHAT WAS *THAT* ALL ABOUT?

YEAH, WHAT HAPPENED, TRACY? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU JUST WALKED INTO A WALL. AND I COULDN'T HELP BUT OVERHEAR--

YOU DIDN'T SAY A ***WORD*** ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO MUMBLES.

NO...

...AND I'M NOT GOING TO. NOT UNTIL I KNOW MORE. FOR RIGHT NOW--

I-I NEED TO GO.

HEY, STOP RIGHT THERE. WHAT'S GOING ON, TRACY?

I NEED TO DO SOMETHING. *ALONE.*

OH, REALLY? SUDDENLY YOU'RE FLYING SOLO? I DON'T THINK SO.

YEAH, WHAT GIVES? FIRST YOU DEPUTIZE ME, NOW YOU'RE TRYING TO SNEAK OUT?

MAYBE YOU FORGOT, BUT MY FATHER DIED AT THE GREEN EYE. SHOT UP SO BAD WE CAN'T EVEN HAVE AN OPEN CASKET AT HIS FUNERAL.

THIS ISN'T DICK TRACY'S WORLD, DETECTIVE. WE'RE A *TEAM* NOW.

WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT.

LADY'S RIGHT, DICK.

SERVES ME RIGHT FOR TRUSTING SOME BANANA-WEARING *COP.*

HUH?!

WAIT--YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M SORRY.

WE ARE A TEAM. AND WE NEED TO ACT LIKE ONE.

SOMEONE IS GUNNING FOR US AND THEY'RE TWO STEPS AHEAD. WE NEED TO BE SMARTER. SHARPER.

WE NEED TO GET TO THEM BEFORE THEY GET TO US.

NICE WORDS, COPPER, BUT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

YEAH, WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

WE PAY A VISIT TO *LIPS MANLIS.*

"QUIT ASKIN' ME QUESTIONS, MARGE."

"ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW IS LIPS IS IN *TROUBLE*... WHICH MEANS I GOTTA RUN, ALL RIGHT?"

EVERY TIME LIPS CALLS, YOU JUMP LIKE A TRAINED ANIMAL, SHOULDERS.

YOU THINK HE'S GONNA RESPECT YOU WHEN YOU CHASE AFTER HIM LIKE THIS?

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, MARGE--QUIT IT, OKAY?

LIPS IS THE BOSS. I WORK FOR THE BOSS.

I'LL BE BACK--

DON'T EVEN BOTHER, YOU HEAR?

CALL ME WHEN YOU GROW A SPINE.

WHY YOU GOTTA BE--

NOK NOK NOK

YOU EXPECTIN' SOMEONE?

NO ONE KNOWS I'M HERE, EXCEPT LIPS HIMSELF.

SHOULDERS, YOU'RE A TRUE ROMANTIC. GET THE HECK OUT OF HERE, AND MAKE SURE YOU PAY YOUR TAB ON THE WAY OUT.

NOK NOK NOK

YEESH, MARGE, HAVE A HEART. I'M WOUNDED.

HEY, HOLD YOUR HORSES, WILL YA?

WHOEVER'S KNOCKIN' IS IN A BIG HURRY...

OH, HEY-- JUNKY...

JUNKY? JUNKY DOOLB? WHAT THE--

NO, NO...WHAT THE--?!

OH--OHMIGOD-- HE'S DEAD! AIIIEEEEEE!

THUNK

WHO?

HIYA, SHOULDERS. HEY, MARGE.

GOOD TO SEE YAS.

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

DON'T YA WORRY ABOUT LIPS.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING, REALLY.

WE GOT IT *ALL* COVERED.

To Be Continued...

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#4

AVAILABLE AUGUST 2024

MAD CAVE 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

THE LAST WARDENS™

#1

ELLIOT SPERL

AMIT TISHLER

RUI SILVEIRA

FRANCESCO SEGALA

FRANK CVETKOVIC

BLEAKWOOD, OR. 1975

WARDENS... OH, WARDENS.

YOU POOR, ILL-FATED SOULS.

I SUMMON YOU TO *HEED MY CALL!*

A *BLIGHT* IS UPON US...

...SO *RISE,* MY SOLDIERS! AWAKEN FROM YOUR SLUMBER!

"WE HAVE A *JOB* TO DO."

DANIELLE!

Unnhh...

WHATCHA DOIN' UP THERE?!

DAMMIT! *I KNOW* YOU CAN *HEAR ME!*

Ugh... give me a break.

WE RAN OUTTA BEER DOWN HERE! BONE DRY! WHY DON'T YOU GET YOUR LAZY ASS DOWN TO OL' WOLFORD'S LIKE YOU PROMISED AND GET ME SOME--

HEY, ASSHOLE! WHY DON'T YOU GET UP AND DO IT YOURSELF?

OH, THAT'S ***RIGHT!*** YOU ***CAN'T*** BECAUSE YOU GOT YOURSELF A D.U.I.!

WATCH YOUR ***MOUTH,*** GIRL! I'M ***STILL*** YOUR ***FATHER*** AND YOU'RE STILL LIVING UNDER ***MY ROOF!***

THE ONLY REASON WE STILL ***HAVE*** A ROOF IS BECAUSE ***I WORK*** TO KEEP US AFLOAT! SO LET ME FINISH SOME ***REAL WORK*** BEFORE ADDING ***MORE*** TO MY PLATE...

...fuckin' *prick.*

:cough: ***I HEARD THAT!***

SLAM

READ THE FULL STORY IN

THE LAST WARDENS #1

JULY 2024

MAD CAVE

SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN... THIS MONSTER!"